



## Planning for Increased On-Site Work

The response of NASA's workforce to the challenges stemming from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has been nothing short of awe-inspiring. Across the agency, I have seen individuals and teams find new ways to keep the mission moving forward, support each other, balance work and family, and even dedicate their expertise and personal time to aid in the national response.

Now that operations have reached a steady cadence, a lot of folks are wondering about the when and how of returning to "normal." As we plan how best to increase on-site work, please know that we will continue to prioritize the health and safety of the workforce.

NASA leadership has developed agencywide guidance that takes into account guidelines provided by the White House and the Offices of Personnel Management and Management and Budget, and calls for a controlled, methodical and flexible return to on-site work. The agency guidance has been condensed into a one-page NASA Framework for Return to On-Site Work, a mirror of the NASA Response Framework and incorporating the national criteria to move from Stage 4 to 3 to 2 to 1.

From the agency guidance, each center is developing a plan to increase on-site work and these plans will be communicated at the center level when complete. The agency guidance and center plans will be dynamic documents and adjusted as the situation evolves, meaning, if conditions worsen in a community, a center may return to an elevated stage of the response framework.

Though center plans will vary, the following considerations apply to the entire workforce:

1. If employees do not feel comfortable returning to or continuing work on-site, they should talk to their supervisor or contract management about options to address their concerns. Alternate work arrangements should be made without reservation or reprisal.
2. High-risk/vulnerable individuals, as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, are encouraged to continue teleworking. This includes, but is not limited to, individuals:
  - aged 65 and over -or-
  - who have underlying health conditions, such as high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, obesity, chronic lung disease (asthma, emphysema, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) -or-

- who are on immune-lowering medications for chronic disease or cancer chemotherapy.

Any employee who fits into one or more of the above categories, or has health factors not mentioned here but which may place them at higher risk, should engage their supervisor. Please note, much is unknown about the risk of this virus to women who are pregnant or breast-feeding.

3. Employees who live with high-risk/vulnerable individuals should be aware that by returning to work, or other environments where social distancing is not practical, they could carry the virus back home. Precautions should be taken to isolate from high-risk/vulnerable individuals at home.
4. Anyone experiencing ANY symptoms of coronavirus should stay home.

Lastly, keep doing what you're doing. Stay in regular contact with your supervisor, take care of yourself, and speak up if you have any questions or concerns. And continue to visit NASA People for the latest information.

Ad astra,

*Jim*